



# Cattle on Feed

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## United States Cattle on Feed Up Slightly

**Cattle and calves on feed** for the slaughter market in the United States for feedlots with capacity of 1,000 or more head totaled 12.0 million head on January 1, 2021. The inventory was slightly above January 1, 2020. The inventory included 7.40 million steers and steer calves, up slightly from the previous year. This group accounted for 62 percent of the total inventory. Heifers and heifer calves accounted for 4.57 million head, down slightly from 2020.

**Placements** in feedlots during December totaled 1.84 million head, 1 percent above 2020. Placements were the second highest for January since the series began in 1996. Net placements were 1.78 million head. During December, placements of cattle and calves weighing less than 600 pounds were 460,000 head, 600-699 pounds were 435,000 head, 700-799 pounds were 425,000 head, 800-899 pounds were 317,000 head, 900-999 pounds were 110,000 head, and 1,000 pounds and greater were 95,000 head.

**Marketings** of fed cattle during December totaled 1.85 million head, 1 percent above 2020. Marketings were the second highest for January since the series began in 1996.

**Other disappearance** totaled 60,000 head during December, 10 percent below 2020.

**Cattle on Feed Inventory, Placements, Marketings, and Other Disappearance on 1,000+ Capacity Feedlots – United States: January 1, 2020 and 2021**

[December preceding year]

Item	2020	2021	Percent of previous year
	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(percent)
On feed December 1 .....	12,031	12,036	100
Placed on feed during December .....	1,828	1,842	101
Fed cattle marketed during December .....	1,834	1,853	101
Other disappearance during December .....	67	60	90
On feed January 1 .....	11,958	11,965	100

**Cattle on Feed Inventory, Placements, Marketings, and Other Disappearance on 1,000+ Capacity Feedlots – United States: December 1, 2019 and 2020**

Item	2019	2020	Percent of previous year
	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(percent)
On feed November 1 .....	11,816	11,973	101
Placed on feed during November .....	2,093	1,903	91
Fed cattle marketed during November .....	1,813	1,779	98
Other disappearance during November .....	65	61	94
On feed December 1 .....	12,031	12,036	100

**Cattle on Feed by Class on 1,000+ Capacity Feedlots – United States: January 1, 2020 and 2021**

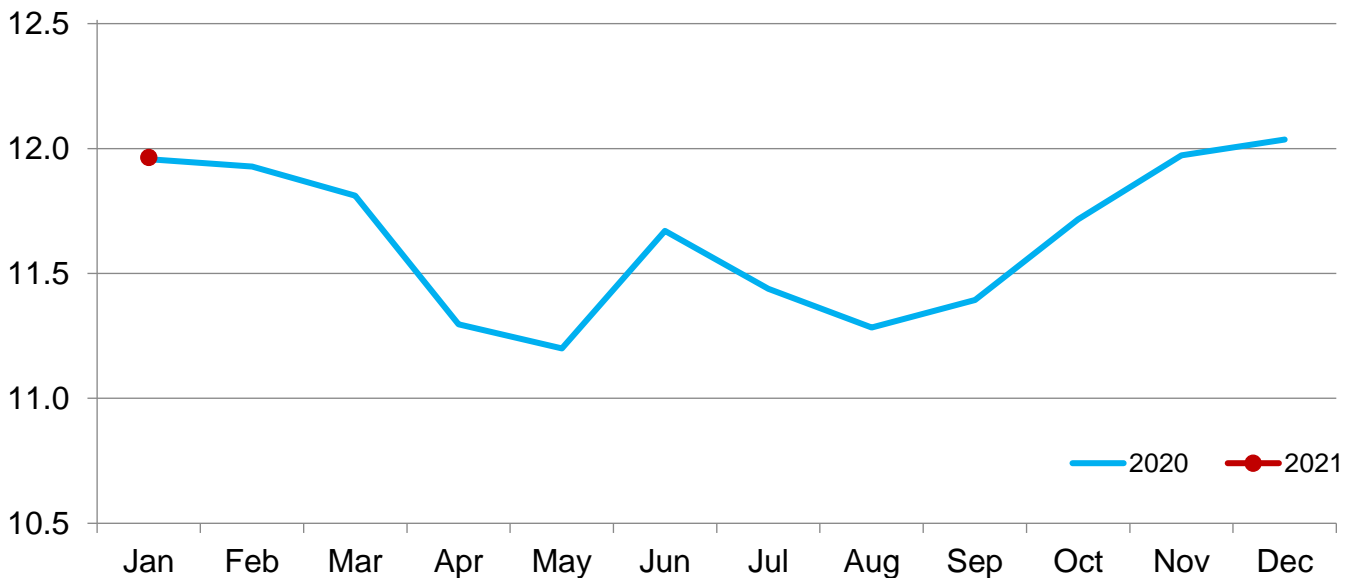
Item	2020	2021	Percent of	
			previous year	inventory
	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(percent)	(percent)
Class on feed January 1 .....				
Steers and steer calves .....	7,373	7,400	100	62
Heifers and heifer calves .....	4,585	4,565	100	38

**Cattle on Feed Inventory on 1,000+ Capacity Feedlots by Month – States and United States:  
2020 and 2021**

State	January 1, 2020	December 1, 2020	January 1, 2021		
			Inventory	Percent of previous year	Percent of previous month
	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(percent)	(percent)
Arizona .....	253	256	260	103	102
California .....	540	555	555	103	100
Colorado .....	1,090	1,130	1,110	102	98
Idaho .....	300	290	285	95	98
Iowa .....	670	610	610	91	100
Kansas .....	2,420	2,500	2,500	103	100
Minnesota .....	135	125	115	85	92
Nebraska .....	2,460	2,530	2,550	104	101
Oklahoma .....	330	325	325	98	100
South Dakota .....	245	250	245	100	98
Texas .....	2,960	2,900	2,870	97	99
Washington .....	235	255	235	100	92
Other States .....	320	310	305	95	98
United States .....	11,958	12,036	11,965	100	99

**Cattle on Feed Inventory on 1,000+ Capacity  
Feedlots – United States**

Million head

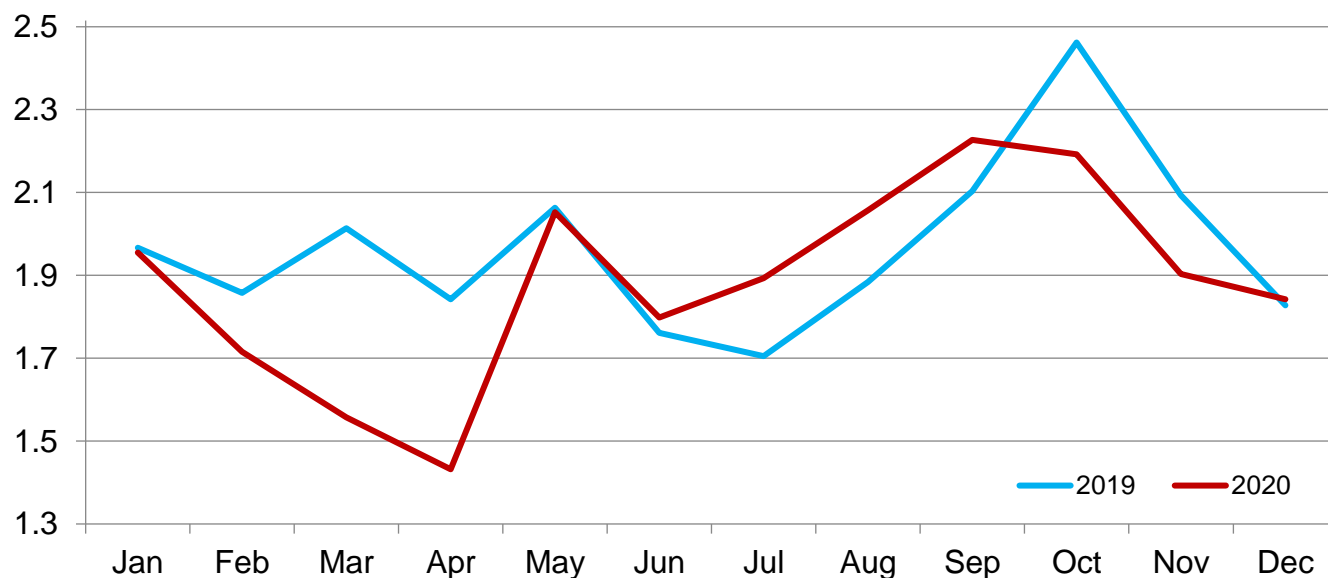


# Cattle Placed on Feed on 1,000+ Capacity Feedlots by Month – States and United States: 2019 and 2020

State	During December 2019	During November 2020	During December 2020		
			Placements	Percent of previous year	Percent of previous month
	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(percent)	(percent)
Arizona .....	25	22	30	120	136
California .....	64	58	65	102	112
Colorado .....	140	165	155	111	94
Idaho .....	36	49	41	114	84
Iowa .....	72	82	93	129	113
Kansas .....	435	415	440	101	106
Minnesota .....	10	15	9	90	60
Nebraska .....	465	460	480	103	104
Oklahoma .....	59	52	43	73	83
South Dakota .....	40	79	40	100	51
Texas .....	410	405	380	93	94
Washington .....	32	45	25	78	56
Other States .....	40	56	41	103	73
United States .....	1,828	1,903	1,842	101	97

## Cattle Placed on 1,000+ Capacity Feedlots – United States

Million head



# Cattle Placed on Feed by Weight Group on 1,000+ Capacity Feedlots and Month – States and United States: 2019 and 2020

State	During December 2019							
	Under 600 lbs	600-699 lbs	700-799 lbs	800-899 lbs	900+ lbs <sup>1</sup>	900-999 lbs	1,000+ lbs	Total
	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)
Colorado .....	30	35	35	25	15	(D)	(D)	140
Kansas .....	65	110	135	80	45	(D)	(D)	435
Nebraska .....	50	110	105	100	100	(D)	(D)	465
Texas .....	170	110	75	40	15	(D)	(D)	410
Other States ...	150	90	63	50	25	(D)	(D)	378
United States ..	465	455	413	295	(X)	95	105	1,828

State	During November 2020							
	Under 600 lbs	600-699 lbs	700-799 lbs	800-899 lbs	900+ lbs <sup>1</sup>	900-999 lbs	1,000+ lbs	Total
	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)
Colorado .....	50	35	30	30	20	(D)	(D)	165
Kansas .....	60	100	125	85	45	(D)	(D)	415
Nebraska .....	80	110	90	85	95	(D)	(D)	460
Texas .....	150	115	80	45	15	(D)	(D)	405
Other States ...	180	100	75	58	45	(D)	(D)	458
United States ..	520	460	400	303	(X)	130	90	1,903

State	During December 2020							
	Under 600 lbs	600-699 lbs	700-799 lbs	800-899 lbs	900+ lbs <sup>1</sup>	900-999 lbs	1,000+ lbs	Total
	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)
Colorado .....	35	40	35	25	20	(D)	(D)	155
Kansas .....	60	100	140	90	50	(D)	(D)	440
Nebraska .....	50	110	115	110	95	(D)	(D)	480
Texas .....	170	95	65	40	10	(D)	(D)	380
Other States ...	145	90	70	52	30	(D)	(D)	387
United States ..	460	435	425	317	(X)	110	95	1,842

(D) Withheld to avoid disclosing data for individual operations.

(X) Not applicable.

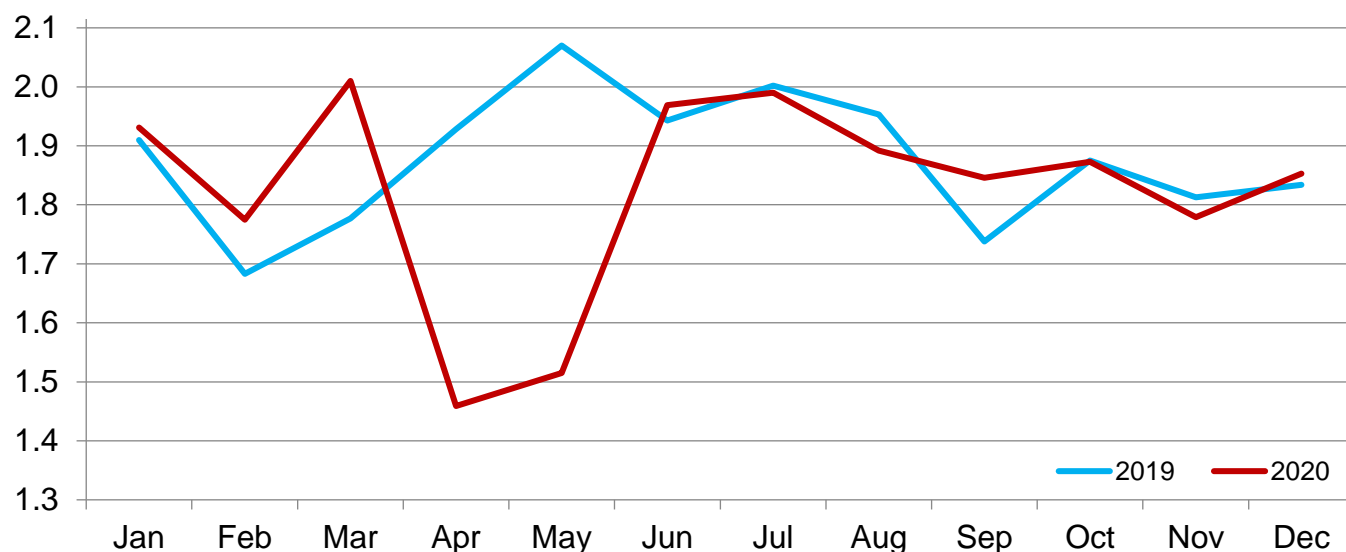
<sup>1</sup> The 900 pounds and greater weight group is the sum of 900-999 pounds and 1,000 pounds and greater weight groups.

## Cattle Marketed on 1,000+ Capacity Feedlots by Month – States and United States: 2019 and 2020

State	During December 2019	During November 2020	During December 2020		
			Marketings	Percent of previous year	Percent of previous month
	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(percent)	(percent)
Arizona .....	27	23	25	93	109
California .....	70	51	61	87	120
Colorado .....	145	150	170	117	113
Idaho .....	35	38	45	129	118
Iowa .....	90	90	91	101	101
Kansas .....	430	425	425	99	100
Minnesota .....	14	14	18	129	129
Nebraska .....	470	415	450	96	108
Oklahoma .....	52	46	42	81	91
South Dakota .....	43	53	43	100	81
Texas .....	365	400	395	108	99
Washington .....	36	34	44	122	129
Other States .....	57	40	44	77	110
United States .....	1,834	1,779	1,853	101	104

## Cattle Marketed on 1,000+ Capacity Feedlots – United States

Million head



### Cattle Other Disappearance on 1,000+ Capacity Feedlots by Month – States and United States: 2019 and 2020

State	During December 2019 (1,000 head)	During November 2020 (1,000 head)	During December 2020		
			Other disappearance (1,000 head)	Percent of previous year (percent)	Percent of previous month (percent)
Arizona .....	1	1	1	100	100
California .....	4	7	4	100	57
Colorado .....	5	5	5	100	100
Idaho .....	1	1	1	100	100
Iowa .....	2	2	2	100	100
Kansas .....	15	10	15	100	150
Minnesota .....	1	1	1	100	100
Nebraska .....	15	15	10	67	67
Oklahoma .....	2	1	1	50	100
South Dakota .....	2	1	2	100	200
Texas .....	15	15	15	100	100
Washington .....	1	1	1	100	100
Other States .....	3	1	2	67	200
United States .....	67	61	60	90	98

**Cattle on Feed by Class on 1,000+ Capacity Feedlots by Quarter – States and United States:  
2020 and 2021**

State	Steers and steer calves			Heifers and heifer calves		
	Jan 1, 2020	Oct 1, 2020	Jan 1, 2021	Jan 1, 2020	Oct 1, 2020	Jan 1, 2021
	(1,000 Head)	(1,000 Head)	(1,000 Head)	(1,000 Head)	(1,000 Head)	(1,000 Head)
Arizona .....	248	252	255	5	5	5
California .....	465	465	470	75	80	85
Colorado .....	585	645	630	505	465	480
Idaho .....	185	150	150	115	120	135
Iowa .....	490	460	445	180	150	165
Kansas .....	1,300	1,380	1,340	1,120	1,160	1,160
Minnesota .....	115	90	95	20	15	20
Nebraska .....	1,490	1,500	1,590	970	910	960
Oklahoma .....	185	175	190	145	140	135
South Dakota .....	140	115	140	105	75	105
Texas .....	1,830	1,780	1,770	1,130	1,090	1,100
Washington .....	135	120	130	100	100	105
Other States .....	205	180	195	115	95	110
United States .....	7,373	7,312	7,400	4,585	4,405	4,565

## Terms and Definitions of Cattle on Feed Estimates

**Cattle on feed** are steers and heifers being fed a ration of grain, silage, hay and/or protein supplement for slaughter market that are expected to produce a carcass that will grade select or better. It excludes cattle being "backgrounded only" for later sale as feeders or later placement in another feedlot.

**Placements** are steers and heifers put into a feedlot, fed a ration which will produce a carcass that will grade select or better, and are intended for the slaughter market.

**Marketings** are steers and heifers shipped out of feedlots to a slaughter market.

**Other disappearance** includes death loss, movement from feedlots to pasture, and shipments to other feedlots for further feeding.

## Statistical Methodology

**Survey Procedures:** During January and July all known feedlots in the United States with capacity of 1,000 or more head are surveyed to provide data for cattle on feed estimates. During the other months, all known feedlots from 16 States are surveyed. The 16 States account for approximately 98 percent of the cattle on feed in feedlots with capacity of 1,000 or more head. Individual State estimates are published monthly for 12 of the 16 States. Data collected from the remaining 4 States are used to establish the "Other States" estimates. These 4 States include Illinois, New Mexico, Oregon, and Wyoming. The "Other States" category represents all cattle on feed with a capacity of 1,000 or more head for the rest of the United States.

**Estimating Procedures:** These cattle on feed estimates were prepared by the Agricultural Statistics Board after reviewing recommendations and analysis submitted by Regional Field Offices. Regional and State survey data were reviewed for reasonableness with each other and with estimates from the previous month when establishing the current estimates.

**Revision Policy:** Revisions to previous estimates are made to improve month to month relationships. Estimates for the previous month are subject to revision in all States each month when current estimates are made. In February, all monthly estimates for the previous year, and the number of feedlots and annual marketings from two years ago are reviewed and subject to revisions. The reviews are primarily based on slaughter data, state check-off or brand data, and any other data that may have been received after the original estimate was made. Estimates will also be reviewed after data from the *Census of Agriculture* are available. No revisions will be made after that date and estimates become final.

**Reliability:** Since all 1,000+ capacity cattle on feed operators in every State are not included in the monthly survey, survey estimates are subject to sampling variability. Survey results are also subject to non-sampling errors such as omissions, duplications, and mistakes in reporting, recording, and processing the data. The effects of these errors cannot be measured directly. They are minimized through rigid quality controls in the data collection process and through a careful review of all reported data for consistency and reasonableness.

To assist users in evaluating the reliability of estimates in this report, the "**Root Mean Square Error**" is shown for selected items in the table on the following page. The "Root Mean Square Error" is a statistical measure based on past performance and is computed using the differences between first and latest estimates. The "Root Mean Square Error" for cattle on feed inventory estimates over the past 24 months is 0.1 percent. This means that chances are 2 out of 3 that the final estimate will not be above or below the current estimate of 12.0 million head by more than 0.1 percent. Chances are 9 out of 10 that the difference will not exceed 0.1 percent.

The table on the following page shows a 24 month record of the range of differences between first and latest estimates for selected items. Using estimates of number on feed as an example, changes between the first estimate and the latest estimate during the past 24 months have averaged 4,000 head, ranging from 0 to 15,000 head. During this period the initial estimate has been above the latest estimate 8 times and has been below the latest estimate 2 times. This does not imply that the initial estimate is likely to understate or overstate final inventory.



## Reliability of Monthly Cattle on Feed Estimates

[Based on data for the past 24 months]

Item	Root mean square error	90 percent confidence level	Difference between first and latest estimate				
			Average	Smallest	Largest	Months	
						Below latest	Above latest
	(percent)	(percent)	(1,000)	(1,000)	(1,000)	(number)	(number)
On feed .....	0.1	0.1	4	0	15	2	8
Placements .....	0.3	0.5	3	0	15	6	4
Marketings .....	0.2	0.4	1	0	15	1	2

## Information Contacts

Listed below are the commodity specialists in the Livestock Branch of the National Agricultural Statistics Service to contact for additional information. E-mail inquiries may be sent to [nass@usda.gov](mailto:nass@usda.gov).

Travis Averill, Chief, Livestock Branch ..... (202) 692-0069

Scott Hollis, Head, Livestock Section ..... (202) 690-2424

Sherry Bertramsen – Livestock Slaughter ..... (202) 690-8632

Holly Brenize – Sheep and Goats ..... (202) 720-0585

Ryan Cowen – Cattle, Cattle on Feed ..... (202) 720-3040

Mike Miller – Milk Production and Milk Cows ..... (202) 720-3278

Suzanne Richards – Dairy Products ..... (202) 720-4448

Seth Riggins – Hogs and Pigs ..... (202) 720-3106

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